

Awesome

Ian Lamming is blown away by the new Nissan Micra

THINK Micra and you will no doubt conjure an image of a cheeky hatchback popular with young and old but not necessarily anyone in the middle.

Think new Micra and you need to consign those images to the annals of history because here is a car that just got serious.

In fact, new Micra is so unrecognisable in every way I can't help thinking Nissan should have called it something different.

When I saw the spy shots I thought 'surely not, this can't be a Micra'. Then I saw the first one on the road and I could not believe just how striking, how modern, how attractive this much bigger hatchback has become. It is stunning.

Inside is equally as good with ultra modern clocks and dash and some of the best quality fixtures and fittings I have seen on a small car.

The fascia looks knitted and is particularly tactile and the whole interior feels beautifully made and designed.

Spec is superb and the test car even featured a spectacular Bose hi-fi which has speakers built into the driver's side headrest offering peerless surround sound. The only time I regretted the system was when number one son found some dreadful piano music on Spotify and the pitch and tone powered straight through my brain giving me a headache. Otherwise it is one of the best sounding systems I have come across – and on an affordable hatch.

Other aspects of Micra that are not just good but are incredible are the big car ride and handling which make the car a stupendous long-distance travel companion. It is just so comfortable and relaxing to drive yet fun through the twists and turns with sharp steering and great poise.

Then there is the 1.5 turbo diesel. I know oil burners are out of favour at the moment but this unit is excellent. It is smooth and powerful, refined and brilliantly economical. On one run I

managed a staggering 88mpg.

Being new, Micra is of course equipped with the latest in touchscreen infotainment technology which is easy and intuitive to set up with your phone and use. This kind of tech is becoming the norm but Micra scores highly as even a confirmed Luddite like me found it a cinch to use.

New Micra has matured in spectacular fashion. It is so good that I got straight on my phone to a friend who has had one in the past and told her to trade her current car in for one immediately. It would so suit her needs as it is easy to drive and park in the city and would gobble up the mileage she clocks travelling the length of the country on family visits.

The only thing I would change is the name as new Micra is light years ahead of the model it replaces. How about the Awesome – you can have that one Nissan for nothing.

Fact File

- Nissan Micra N-Connecta
- Engine: 1.5 litre diesel
- Power: 90PS
- 0-62mph: 11.9
- Top speed: 111mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 88.3
- Transmission: five-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 104

